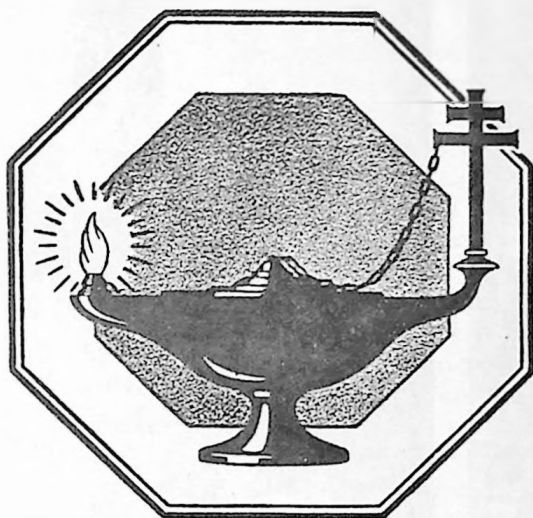


TOC H JOURNAL



APRIL—MCMXLIV

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TOC H JOURNAL

VOL. XXII

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No. 4

THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

Somewhere, most likely in Scotland, someone—a mother, wife or girl friend, has been waiting for news of a soldier in Italy. He will be posted as 'missing.' Somewhere in Great Britain—or, maybe, overseas, but we shall not know which it is—a Toc H unit will honour his name among the Elder Brethren. Here is the last act in an Unknown Soldier's story, told in a letter home by an eye-witness, 'Spud' Thomson of Partick Group.

I HAD a link with Toc H if you'd like to hear the story. The place was in the news some time ago, so it can't be a breach of security, but this story wasn't in any newspapers.

"The time is set at very early morning. There had been a 'do' on, with the usual anti-climax reactions after it which leaves one rather suspended after that peculiar stimulation of danger. I was quite alone by the side of a house and the weather had broken; I thought that shelter and a rest were indicated, so I approached the door. Something white was jammed in the door, this I removed rather cannily (booby-traps are still a very grim reality) and pushed my way inside. I lit up then, and discovered that in the door jamb had been part of Toc H JOURNAL dated May, '43. Further exploration of some of the rooms produced queer feelings up and down my spine—*ceric* is a very adequate word—because a meal had been prepared by the former tenants just before their tragic departure. In fact, things were very much just how they had lived—blankets laid out, the usual Army dinner, not quite cold yet, laid out on a form

surrounded by petrol tins as improvised seats, and a half-finished air-mail to someone's mother. I admit I had to shake myself before things got a grip of me.

"I went upstairs and found then that I wasn't alone as I'd thought. Lying in a corner badly shot up was one of our blokes. He couldn't speak or move, so I made him as comfortable as possible, but it was of no avail; my vigil didn't last long; just as the first fingers of light pierced the sky he passed on. He had nothing on him for identification, but on his wrist was a Toc H strap badge.

"Some other fellows had caught up with me then, so we buried him as best we could. We had peace to do it; after the noise and hustle everything was so quiet and tranquil; no elaborate ceremony, no flowers, a rough wooden cross. I buried my Toc H diary with him, then said 'Light' over him. That simple ceremony will always have for me a new significance now. We didn't know the bloke or anything about his life but it made me just a little bit proud to do that much for that new member in the exalted ranks of the Elder Brethren."

Epitaph

Each one, man by man, has won a praise that grows not old, each has won a glorious grave. . . For the whole earth is the sepulchre of brave men: monuments may rise and tablets be set up to them in their own land, but on far-off shores there is an abiding memorial that no pen or chisel has traced; it is graven, not on stone or brass, but on the living heart of humanity. Take these men for your example. Like them remember that prosperity can be only for the free, that freedom is the sure possession of those alone who have courage to defend it.—(From the speech of PERICLES in B.C. 431 on the men of Athens who fell in the first year of the Peloponnesian War).

THE ELDER BRETHREN

ATHERTON.—Killed in action with the Central Mediterranean Forces in September, 1943, PETER ATHERTON, L/Cpl., aged 21. A probationer of Wigan Branch.

BARNARD.—In January, HAROLD BARNARD, aged 36, a member of Coleford Group. Elected 25.10.'33.

BARNES.—Missing in June, 1943, now reported killed in action, SYDNEY JAMES BARNES, Flight-Sergt. (Navigator), R.A.F., aged 23, a member of Greenford Branch. Elected 2.6.'37.

BARNFORTH.—Missing at sea, now presumed killed, COLIN BARNFORTH, a member of Ponders End Group and of the London Toc H Choir. Elected 3.10.'35.

CANNING.—In January, RUSSELL CANNING (professionally known as 'FREDERICK CHESTER'), a member of Portmadoc Branch. Elected 5.6.'41.

DENGATE.—In December, 1943, WILLIAM PERCY DENGATE, a member of Ticehurst Branch. Elected 17.1.'33.

DIXON.—On active service on January 10, EDGAR BENTLEY DIXON, Sub-Lieut., R.N.V.R., aged 23, a member of Ealing Branch. Elected 1.12.'40.

EGERTON.—On January 15, Rev. L. O. EGERTON, a member of Louth Branch. Elected 29.3.'42.

ELLIOT.—By enemy action in London on February 20, EDWARD HALHED HUGH ELLIOT, Lt.-Col., R.H.A. (retired), Secretary of Mayfair Group and Assistant Secretary, International Relations Committee. Elected 2.5.'33.

ELLIS.—Killed in action in Italy in January, Rev. CECIL R. W. ELLIS, C.F., formerly a member of Withington Branch, then Padre of Hartlepool and Ellesmere Port. Elected 15.7.'30.

FOSTER.—On December 9, 1943, suddenly, ALBERT G. FOSTER, a member of Ingrow Group, formerly of Keighley Branch. Elected 22.5.'35.

FRANKS.—On February 2, after ten years' illness (three years bedridden), gallantly borne, LUTHER FRANKS, aged 48, a member of Urmston Branch. Elected 19.11.'35.

HOLLWEY.—Killed in action in March, 1943, on the Burma front, W. HOLLWEY, a member of Corsham Branch. Elected 21.3.'38.

JILL.—On January 19, after short illness, G. JILL, Treasurer of Wadhurst Branch. Elected 2.1.'34.

JULIAN.—Killed in action in August, 1943, W. B. JULIAN, Sergt. (Observer), R.A.F., a member of Ripon Branch. Elected 4.11.'40.

KIRBY.—On February 1, suddenly, JOHN WILLIAM KIRBY, a member of Southborough Branch. Elected 19.11.'32.

KIRBY.—On January 2, after long illness, THOMAS KIRBY, a founder member of Chilliwack Group, Canada. Elected 1.1.'21.

LUMLEY.—On February 21, WILLIAM LUMLEY, a member of Leeds Branch. Elected 7.10.'33.

NOBLE.—Killed in action early in 1943, LEONARD STUART NOBLE, Rifle Brigade, a member of Meerut Group, India. Initiated at Winchester, 15.4.'36.

PARRY WILLIAMS.—Killed in action in Italy, Rev. A. W. PARRY WILLIAMS, C.F., a member of Herne Bay Group. Elected 19.5.'38.

PELHAM.—On March 11, HERBERT SIDNEY PELHAM, Bishop of Barrow-in-Furness. Elected 14.4.'28.

PILE.—On active service, F. D. PILE, 2nd-Lieut., R. Tank Corps. Elected 2.10.'35.

POWELL.—On November 7, 1943, STANLEY LANGHORNE POWELL, aged 84 years, a benefactor of Talbot House, Poperinghe, and member at Eastbourne. Elected 12.12.'29.

RICHARDSON.—Missing, now reported killed in action in the Mediterranean on November 17, 1943, ARTHUR RICHARDSON, Pte., The Buffs, Jobmaster of Saffron Walden Branch. Elected 19.6.'39.

TAYLOR.—On active service in Italy in November, 1943, DAVID TAYLOR, Gnr., R.A., Pilot of Nairn Group. Elected 23.5.'34.

TOWNER.—On February 27, H. W. TOWNER, Capt., O.B.E., aged 70, Treasurer of Salisbury Branch. Elected 23.3.'26.

VICARAGE.—On October 26, 1943, RICHARD ('DICK') VICARAGE, a member of Castle Cary Branch. Elected 14.7.'43.

THE PROBLEM OF THE YOUNG REFUGEE

At the Editor's invitation, Mr. C. C. SALWAY, Publicity Officer of the Christian Council for Refugees from Germany and Central Europe, contributes this article.

COMPARATIVELY few members of the British public realise that in the five years preceding the outbreak of war something like 11,000 German and Austrian children were rescued from the clutches of the Nazis and brought to this country. Some of them came with their parents under the auspices of one or other of the voluntary refugee organisations, but a large proportion became our guests as the result of a remarkable achievement by the Refugee Children's Movement or, as it was then called, the Movement for the Care of Children from Germany.

During the nine months between the terrible Nazi pogrom of November, 1938, directed against Jews and people of Jewish origin, and the outbreak of war the Movement made arrangements for the travel, reception and placing in this country of no fewer than 9,400 boys and girls. This work of mercy was, of course, made possible by the humane action of the British Home Office, which consented to waive the normal passport formalities. Plans for the rescue of some hundreds more were interrupted by the beginning of hostilities on the Continent.

British Hospitality

The children were distributed throughout the country. Many of them enjoyed the generous hospitality of private homes. Others were placed in schools and hostels, or in training centres maintained by the various refugee committees, but the Movement maintained its close personal contact with the children under its care and made adequate provision for their welfare in the case of any emergency through its local Guardian Committees, now operating in the twelve Regional Defence areas.

Most of the young refugees settled down quickly and happily in their new surroundings. They picked up the English language rapidly and responded readily to the kind treatment meted out to them in no uncertain measure by their British hosts. Remembrance of their Nazi experiences soon faded into the

background like an evil dream. No doubt, some of the children at first experienced quite understandable feelings of nostalgia owing largely to the fact that comparatively few of the parents were able to follow their offspring to this country, but, generally speaking, the atmosphere of freedom and security did its work in an amazingly brief period of time.

No Longer Children

Having regard to the smooth working of this admirable scheme and to the provision of the necessary finance through Government agency when the money provided by a substantial grant from the Lord Baldwin Fund had been exhausted, it may well be asked in what consists the "Problem of the Young Refugee." There *is* a problem, however, and a very real one. It should be remembered that the last contingent of these young people arrived in this country only a week or two before Hitler's invasion of Poland landed us in the European maelstrom. Even the latest-comers have, therefore, been here for 4½ years, while some were brought over five years and more ago. Many of those who were children when they arrived have reached adolescence and it is estimated that more than 3,000 of these boys and girls are now earning their own living, or training for productive work on behalf of the national effort.

It comes as a shock to some of them to learn that at the age of 16 they must register with the Police. The act of registration, though a perfectly normal one in our organisation for dealing with aliens, conjures up sinister visions of the Gestapo and revives the feelings of insecurity which had previously, it was hoped, been largely dissipated. Moreover, it brings home to these young people that they are still "strangers in a strange land," labelled as "enemy aliens," though, as the result of their treatment and training in the past few years, they have in many instances become quite aggressively British.

Leaving school to earn their daily bread has meant to some of these youngsters migration to the cities and towns, especially to London, and, what is worse from their point of view, the loss of those associations which have brought them so much happiness, the real affection for their youthful charges which has been warmly felt in hundreds of British homes and which has been as warmly reciprocated. New surroundings and often the lack of congenial companionship have accentuated the feelings of loneliness engendered by comparison of their present experiences with their former happiness.

Anxiety for the Future

To these considerations may be added anxiety in regard to the future, a very real dread—common to adult and adolescent alike—lest, as refugees, they should be compelled to leave the country as soon as the war is over, and uncertainty as to the fate of such relatives as they may have, or have had, in Central Europe.

Of course, some of these young refugees will after the war wish to rejoin their parents either in their own country or in some land of refuge other than this, but alas! it is certain that in only too many cases the whereabouts of the parents are unknown and may never be traced. The Nazis have carried out their devilish work of deportation and murder too thoroughly for much hope to remain.

It seems probable, therefore, that most of these young people will desire to remain in a country to which they owe so much. They would as a rule make excellent citizens of the British Commonwealth. During their most impressionable years they have been inspired with the love of those principles of truth, justice and freedom on which we rightly set such great store and for which we are fighting at the present time. They have a thoroughly British background and withal are most of them intelligent and industrious. In short,

these young people are British in all but name. In due course, perhaps, some of them may become naturalised. That is, of course, a question of Government policy and the grant of British nationality must obviously depend on the situation prevailing after the war and on individual qualifications.

How Toc H Can Help

Meanwhile, many of these children have reached, or are approaching, adolescence—a difficult period. They need and must be given all the help of which we are capable. The refugee lad is a special problem. Removed, as he has been in so many cases, from the comparatively sheltered life of home, school or hostel, he finds himself suddenly called upon to face an unknown future in entirely new environment. More often than not he at first does not know anybody and is inexpressibly lonely. It is at a time like this that the influence of such a body as Toc H, with its fine record of work, especially among the young, can be so beneficial.

Members might undertake to seek out these youthful wayfarers and try to induce them to join the local Group or Branch. Here and there, perhaps, the approach might for one reason or another be unsuccessful, but in the majority of instances, it may be safely said, the contact would be eagerly welcomed. Social companionship, altogether outside the orbit of the factory bench or the desk, is a necessity for the young, especially when they stand on the threshold of their business life. It is of vital importance that this companionship should be of the right sort, a real comradeship, the value of which to these young refugees would be incalculable. Toc H members may rest assured that any work they undertake in this direction will be greatly appreciated by those who have the interests of the refugees, old and young alike, at heart. That they will find it also well worth while admits of no doubt whatever.

C. C. SALWAY.

NOTE: Col. Elliot, whose death in an air-raid we record with deep regret on p. 52, was beginning to tackle this job. Another member of our International Relations Committee who attended the Conference of Refugee Regional Council representatives in December, found that the personal methods of Toc H were warmly appreciated. He writes that "the Toc H unit is thus an ideal group for this purpose" of a 'two-way' approach to the refugee (*Toc H International Bulletin*, January, 1944). The address of the Christian Council for Refugees from Germany and Central Europe is Bloomsbury House, Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.—ED.

THE BOYS COME HOME—II. “But what is Toc H?”

In the February JOURNAL, under this heading, DALLAS RALPH and IAN FRASER dealt with some of the elementary ‘machinery’ which we ought to construct and set in motion now in our preparations to receive our members—and many potential members—who will come home from active service. Already repatriated prisoners of war and discharged Service men are appearing in local units, to find Toc H fulfilling their hopes or disappointing them. There is no time to be lost. Now MAYNE ELSON (South Western Regional Secretary) carries the subject a stage further and deeper. We propose to follow it up further still in these pages.

ONE of these days, we who have been left at home all this time, just sitting (or have we?), shall begin to wake up to the quality of the work which our Clubs and teams are doing round the Mediterranean, in the P.O.W. Camps and elsewhere overseas. Already one notices the bubbling enthusiasm of new members from those parts; it is clear that Toc H has touched something very deep within them. Some of them will bring back a Toc H more youthful in its outlook and with a more progressive spirit than we have ever known. However, when the present tiny trickle broadens into a flow the enthusiasts will, as usual, be in a minority. There will be many others who will know the movement only because they found a friendly welcome and a cup of tea one evening in a Services Club. Many more will know less than that. And we are yearning to attract them all, because we believe Toc H can help them in the world to which they will return, if they will only give a trial to helping Toc H.

The Faith of Toc H

All these men will have concerns about the post-war world—they have them already. Mostly they will be personal concerns. “What sort of a home am I going to be able to get for my wife and kiddies? Am I going to be on the street like they were last time? Or am I going to get a job, and if so, will it be something I can put my heart into, or just so many hours’ work-a-day which I must do to keep going? And how long will it last . . . what about freedom from uncertainty?” and so on. They won’t find the answers to those questions in Toc H. We haven’t got them; as a movement it’s not our job to have them, though as individual members it *is* our job to see that the right answers will be forth-

coming. What, then, can Toc H do to help these men? (And women: for “men” please read “men and women” throughout).

It’s a matter of what we believe in, of what we mean when we say that “behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the eternal realities.” Our task is unchanged: to attract more and more men who will share our faith that there is a Divine Plan for the world; who will come in and help us each to find out what that Plan is, and what our part in it may be; who will realise that because God has given His children free-will and creative power, they can, and do, bring about in the world both good and evil; who will join us in treating men as persons and not in the mass; who will try with us the Toc H method of expressing fellowship by service, learning to live together in love during the process; who will take the trouble to make friends, not only with their fellow-men, but with Jesus. We have to challenge them to attempt all these things, and others which you can think of for yourselves, in the belief that thus they will find, as we have found, a life of happiness and fulfilment.

First Impressions

But, first of all, we have to strike some spark in a man’s mind which will make him *want* to attempt something like this. The first step is the most delicate, because first impressions count for so much. Hence we should consider once more what we are going to answer—and what, in fact, we do answer without speech—to the old question: “But what *is* Toc H?” It may not be asked in words. If a man drops in or is invited to a unit meeting, by the end of the evening he has asked that question in his mind and received part of the answer—a very important

part, his first impression. He will have formed a half-conscious judgment from the way we received him; from the way the meeting was run; from the sort of people whom he found there; from the subject-matter of the programme; from the "atmosphere" of the whole show. Let us therefore neither be off-hand nor too effusive with our guests; let us begin punctually, plan our meetings beforehand and run them as well as we know how—and learn how over again if we have forgotten*; let our enthusiasm be seasoned with the senses of humour and proportion, but let it be evident; let us discuss something worth while; and let us not worry too much about 'atmosphere,' which will be all right if we have done the other things.

Or perhaps we have chosen another way (a very good one) and asked a man to help us with a piece of service we have undertaken. He will get his first impression in that case from such points as whether the job is really worth doing or not; whether it is well done, or sloppily done, by the members; whether it is finished off properly or left with 'ragged ends'; whether it is truly *personal service*; and his understanding will be increased if we can show him just *why* that particular thing is being done by Toc H.

The Question Direct

But what about the spoken question? When a man asks us point-blank we ought to remember two things. The first is that the story and tradition of the Old House, so real to those who used the house in 1915-18 and to many others who have since made the pilgrimage there, is likely to mean nothing at all to him, to awaken no memory of his own experiences. Secondly, we shall have to be aware of giving the impression which, I fear, we often give, which is something like this: "If you want to join Toc H, you will have to be a very good boy indeed." We don't mean it that way, but the impression remains. We must keep our high standards for the movement, but we should take care that men are not frightened off just because the standards seem too high *for them*. (I've never forgotten

that feeling of not being good enough, which I had strongly as a probationer. It is one which I hope never to lose, but it nearly kept me out).

It all depends on how it's put. We have learnt much in Toc H about thinking *fairly*; and many of us have learnt to think *more or less deeply*; this is a case, first of all, for thinking *clearly*. Somewhere it is written, most truly, that Toc H is not a society of *good* men, it is a movement of triers. We need to keep firmly in our minds the distinction between the aims and objects of the movement as a whole, and the standard of life and conduct which is required of the individual member. The Main Resolution is a case in point, to illustrate my meaning. Too often it is assumed to be a personal pledge, to which we subscribe in writing on the Application Form. "We pledge ourselves to strive to listen now and always for the voice of God; to know His will revealed in Christ and to do it fearlessly . . ."—enough to frighten anyone out of his wits! But the Resolution is not a *personal* pledge, unless and until one humbly makes it so. It was drawn up as the fullest expression which could be devised, on the highest possible level, of the aims of the movement *as a whole*. In any case the key word is "strive." We say in effect: "This is what Toc H is trying to do." The Application Form is a written pledge only that the applicant accepts, and undertakes to work for, our objects. There is more than hair-splitting in this; none of us dare demand of a man, as a condition, so vast a pledge as the Main Resolution—we are only triers ourselves.

It's Up to You

"Spread the Gospel without preaching it"—did I hear someone say? Yes, I know that deeds are better than words and that the character and example of our membership should speak for themselves. I know also that you have a splendid Branch Pilot whose business it is to instruct probationers; and that your Secretary has free pamphlets for you to give to your friend who has asked you the question. But you brought him up against Toc H, and he wants the answer from *you*.

* For instance, we might re-read *The Bridge Builders* (obtainable from Headquarters, 1/-, plus postage).

If we are to give these fellows a square deal I think we've each got to do our best to be ready with that answer, in terms within the understanding of a man who may not be highly educated or religious in his outlook, but not withholding the challenge or the depth of Toc H—a picture painted with bold outlines and honest colours, yet with a delicate, sure touch. It won't be the same answer for all of us, nor the same for each of them, but we can't get out of giving one. Literature has its uses (otherwise H.Q. wouldn't issue it—they're quite sensible people really!) and so has your Pilot; but your friend will have been attracted or repelled or frightened away long before he has had time to weigh up any but the most outstanding personalities, to assimilate pamphlets or to go through a Pilot's course of instruction (if indeed such didactic methods are desirable). It's up to you.

We are looking forward to a big increase in membership after the war. Let us take care that in our desire for this we do not admit men on false pretences, or rather, on no pretences at all. In many cases we have rightly shortened the period of probation, making members without delay because they were

about to join up. We are in danger, however, of lowering the quality of our membership by assuming, but omitting to ensure, that such men fully understand what they are taking on. In a unit meeting recently I was asked to initiate a lad who was joining up the following week. He had been duly elected, so I complied gladly. But I found that he had never seen an Application Form, let alone signed one! If we elect in haste our responsibility towards the applicant is all the greater, and if we neglect it Toc H somewhere will pay the penalty of a bewildered, lukewarm and finally "lapsed" member. And the man himself? He asked for bread, and we gave him a stone.

It's a hard job, this explaining Toc H. It calls for a firm grip in our own minds of the deepest things about our movement and of its methods. It means attempting to put truths of religion and philosophy into words which will be "understood of the people." It seems to call for an eloquence which few of us possess. But it is both a duty and a privilege. Summoning to our aid the four-fold preparation of reading, thought, discussion and prayer, we can at least try.

MAYNE ELSON.

ELEPHANT POINT

The February JOURNAL gave the earliest news of our first venture on the Burma front, a leave camp on the coast of the Akyab Peninsula, very close behind the fighting line. Many members had the unexpected pleasure of hearing a lively description of it broadcast as a post-script to the 6 o'clock Home Service news recently. The speaker was RICHARD SHARP, B.B.C. War Correspondent in Burma. This is what he told us:—

THERE is a new holiday camp on the shores of the Bay of Bengal for which rich sportsmen would have paid high prices before the war. There are elephants, deer and wild pig to be hunted in the jungle covering the hills behind it; there are miles and miles of sand and warm sea in front of it and at this time of year, the most lovely weather. Sunny with breezes blowing off the sea—not too hot and not too cold.

It is a holiday camp made and furnished and run by Toc H, just out of sound of Arakan guns and it is open to all members of His Majesty's and Allied forces at three shill-

ings a day for officers and one-and-six a day for other ranks. The Army supplies the rations. The buildings are big bamboo one-roomed houses scattered among fir trees. The men sleep in them and eat in a very big dining-room; they have an enormous recreation room. There is space in it for eight hundred to a thousand people, and as only one hundred and eight men are admitted at once you see they are not crowded. They had enough crowding at the front.

In addition to all the usual games there are organised games like 'housie-housie,' football, cricket and baseball, and the Warden has sets

of gramophone records arranged in concerts—forty-minute variety, for example, or forty minutes' classical music.

But the chief merit of the camp to my mind, is the pains that are taken to give men complete change from the life they have been leading in trenches and dugouts or hunting the Japs in the jungle and among the hills. I saw a draft arrive yesterday. They were dusty and dirty; their faces were pretty grim. They sat at tables with white cloths and crockery and knives and forks, they were waited on by benign Indians in snow-white clothes and you could see incredulity amounting almost to suspicion on their faces. Hot water and bright lights instead of hurricane lamps or candles or no light at all—these things are luxuries. It is luxury to have all their clothes washed clean (fourpence for larger garments, twopence for things like socks), and luxury beyond luxury to have morning tea brought to them in beds which have sheets and pillow cases.

They are always thinking of home, these men. If you look in the visitors' book you will see that they have written their home addresses in the fullest detail—taking pleasure in it. They ask what time it is in England now. "Ha," they say, "the one o'clock news will just be coming on." They like the old tunes on the gramophones. There are plenty of good new tunes, but the old tunes are the ones they heard at home. You should see the photographs some of them preserve, so stained and worn that the features are hardly recognisable, let alone likenesses. "That's the wife and that's the kid," they say. "Four years old." They come to this camp for a week,

and it doesn't count as leave. It is the nearest approach to home many of them will see for some time and it is a good thing to have made.

A Soldier's Letter

At the end of January, Gunner W. Squire, who is not (yet) a member of Toc H, wrote home to his parents from Elephant Point. Here is the whole of his airgraph:—

"I am writing to you from a Toc H Rest Camp somewhere in India. I have been here five days and will be leaving the day after to-morrow. This place is the real thing, run by a Staff of Toc H personnel and it must be the best Rest Camp in India. It is situated on the beach. The Camp is constructed entirely of bamboo, a large dining-hall with separate tables. We are all waited on by first-class bearers and the food is the best I have ever had since I have been out East. A large lounge with easy chairs and plenty of games. The sleeping quarters are just as good, eight men in a "basher" and beds with white sheets.

"A Press photographer and a newsreel man came yesterday: you may get a chance of seeing what it is like for yourself. All I can say is 'God bless Toc H!'"

* * *

We had heard tell of the photographs and film already and impatiently await a sight of them at home. As the Far Eastern Command penetrates into Burma, Elephant Point, let us hope, will become a 'back area' and our work will go forward. Meanwhile, the Toc H Rest Camp, doomed to destruction by the monsoon before long, will have fully justified its career.

EASTWARD HO!

The opportunity—and already the demand—for Toc H in the South East Asia Command, from India eastwards, is almost unlimited. We have sent, with much effort, about 15 men out from home so far and found a few more on the spot, but Alan Cowling, our Commissioner, has pressed for a consultation with the Hon. Administrator about our

whole plan of campaign in the Far East. 'Lako' has therefore flown to India, arriving in mid-March. He has already exchanged cables with H.Q. at home about the business in hand. He had a chance to meet our staff in Egypt *en route* and met Tubby on arrival in India. During his absence, Padre HERBERT LEGGATE is acting as his Deputy.

“ LIGHT ”

At the Birthday Festival of Truro Branch, held on February 26, this address was given in the Baptist Church, River St., by Canon R. H. W. ROBERTS, Senior Chaplain to the Forces.

A GOOD deal is often said on these occasions which is not so much wrong as simply inadequate. How often we go away from a Toc H Birthday Festival—or similar gatherings—with a vague feeling of general well-being which might be summed up by the expression “A good time was had by all!”

Now the problems confronting our day and generation are too serious for any such easy-going optimism to be justifiable. Civilization is sick unto death and drastic treatment is demanded. In dealing with a chronic complaint we may reach a stage where a mild sedative, or even a stimulating tonic, are poor substitutes for an urgent surgical operation. We allow ourselves to be put off with pious platitudes or over-subtle analogies, when what we need is hard thinking and plain speaking.

What is Toc H and what is it out to do? Many of its activities can be equally well carried out, and are sometimes better performed, by other agencies. We invite people to attend our meetings and talk about their own particular job, and so we get an interesting sidelight on different occupations: a Rotary Club does this. The Citizens' Advice Bureau is admirably fitted to advise people about the hundred and one perplexing problems of daily life which crop up in any local society, and the W.V.S. is an excellent clearing-house for the activities of those who are anxious to give their services to the community: they have the additional advantage in that many of their members are able to make this a more or less whole-time job instead of having to find time for serving others in the midst of a busy life, which already has too few leisure hours. Or again we meet together for interesting talks followed by discussion dealing with present-day problems and the coming New Order. This is good, but A.B.C.A. does that within the Army and the Workers' Educational Association outside. What, then, is the peculiar contribution of Toc H, what its platform and basis?

Our Symbol of Light

Not by chance, but by a happy inspiration, the sign of Toc H is a lamp and its distinctive ceremony that of ‘Light.’ Now our Lord constantly referred to Light, applying the term both to Himself and also to the work of His followers. Of Himself He says “I am the Light of the World.” In the prologue to his Gospel, St. John declares “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not”—or perhaps, more exactly, “the darkness did not overcome it.” Our Lord's judgment on the men of that generation was that “light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.” His followers, too, are to be the light of the world and He urges them, in the words of our re-dedication, to let their light so shine before men that, their good works being seen, men may glorify God. So throughout the Bible the analogy of Light is employed. It is there in the very act of creation with which the story starts:—“And darkness was upon the face of the deep. And God said let there be light and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good.” The whole heavens are illuminated to proclaim the birth of Him Who is to be the “light to lighten the Gentiles,” and when later He hangs dying upon a cross in man's full prime the sun withdraws its light and there is darkness over all the land. So to the conclusion and consummation of the story. The aged St. John sees in his vision the New Jerusalem—the Holy City that is to be—“And there was no night there. And they need no candle, neither light of the sun for the Glory of God did lighten it and the Lamp is the light thereof.” So we see that the Bible is full of such references to Light, its nature and function.

The use of the Lamp as a symbol, and Light as a ceremony, is a declaration and reminder that Toc H is a brotherhood of service born

out of the agony of the last war. When that was started Lord Grey of Falloden—then Sir Edward Grey—stood with a colleague at the windows of the Foreign Office in Whitehall and used these words: "The lights are going out all over Europe." For over four years western civilisation reeled to and fro in the darkness of death and destruction and then suddenly the fighting ceased and the lights went up again. There was, as you know, a little band of Englishmen who had kept the light burning in their hearts and who were determined that all the sacrifice and comradeship born during those dark days in Europe should not be allowed to die, and Toc H came to birth. From the very outset it was a religious movement. About that fact there can be no shadow of doubt. This was the intention of its founders and it was definitely stated in its constitution and literature. Those who were admitted to its fellowship were to spread religion without preaching it, by Christ-like lives to show to men the royal dignity of simple service, and thus to satisfy those who cry "Sir, we would see Jesus."

The Faith of the Founders

For such a movement what better symbol could be employed than that of light? Light, which is the annihilation of darkness as good is the destroyer of evil; light, which, as long as it exists, shines out into the surrounding gloom and, wherever its rays can reach, dispels the darkness of despair. Those so pledged to bear the light affirm that "there is not enough darkness in all the world to put out the light of one small candle." This is the faith which has sustained the pioneers of Toc H throughout the intervening years of the last quarter of a century. At first the task seemed not too difficult for, as men turned from war to peace, those who were not too tired to respond to any further challenge of self-giving felt the thrill of building such a brotherhood. It spread from Mark to Mark, from town to town, from Branch to Branch, from "Group" to "groupe," until it rivalled the largest firms of multiple shops in its imposing array of light-purveying depots—a Branch in every town and a Rushlight in

every rural-district-area! And the tide went with us. People wanted that sort of thing. The flame leapt from land to land and soon a chain of light encircled the globe.

Let us thank God for it, for the story of Toc H to date is one of real solid achievement and it has meant much in the lives of men of all colours and classes—more than will ever be known until the books are opened. Comfort for the mourners, comradeship for the lonely, a renewal of self-esteem for the despised and oppressed, the restoration of hope to many a heart forlorn. And let it never be forgotten or denied. It is a by-no-means negligible contribution towards the sum total of human effort for human well-being during the present and preceding generation. It is a magnificent record of

Simple service, simply given
To their own kind in their common need.

An Inner Weakness

But that is not the whole story. If we do well to thank God for what has been so true and splendid, we do well also, on such an occasion as this, to look at the debit side of the account and to take warning where weaknesses are discovered. We are not merely a self-admiration society met together to scratch one another's backs. In spite of much that is good, there is—as perhaps in all things human—there must be—a reverse side to the picture. Why haven't we done more? In so far as we have failed, to what is our failure due?

Admittedly the work of Toc H has been doubly difficult during the last decade. Ever before the war the feeling for federation and the urge towards brotherhood had suffered a set-back for some years in the face of a recrudescence of the forces of aggression which tended to drive men's thoughts towards self security and a narrower nationalism. And since 1939, every Branch has been drained of many, if not most, of its younger and keener members, and those who have been left have been trying to keep up their Branch activities in addition to a whole new set of jobs sufficient in themselves to fill every moment of their leisure hours.

Yet some of us had already sensed an inner

weakness before the war burst upon our land. In saying this I speak not as a superior and self-complacent critic, but as a fellow-member and a self-confessed sharer of the blame. And this, I think, is where the weakness lay. Too often we have been trying to run under our own steam. We have done the jobs—in so far as we have done them—largely in our own strength. But all light in this world, save that of the sun itself, is a transformation or reflection of light received. We have gone on trying to reflect a light that has grown dim because we have not consciously and continuously renewed the charge. Too often our jobs, with the best intentions in the world, have degenerated into a kind of fussiness—so that jobmasters have been known to deplore the fewness of tasks available—instead of being the natural and inherent outcome of a burning religious zeal. If we are simply another human agency in addition to those which I have already enumerated, our service will be perhaps a splendid but none the less pathetic form of humanism, which believes that the world can be saved by works devoid of faith.

When the other day I had occasion to address some of my clerical brethren, and to review the present state of institutional religion in this country, I stressed the need for works for I believe that, on the whole, the Churches have for some time laid too great an emphasis on faith, and we rightly reminded ourselves that Our Lord insisted that His followers should be known by their fruits—

“faith without works is dead.” But, if that is the peculiar danger of ‘professional’ Christians, we in Toc H tend to swing to the other extreme, to “throw out the baby with the bath-water,” to pretend that “it doesn’t matter what a man believes” (or whether he ever goes to church) provided that he keeps himself busily-occupied with good works. Toc H was quite right in seeking to adjust the balance, to bring Christ out of the churches, but it must be Christ you bring out and offer to men, not merely well-intentioned human aspirations and ideals.

God meant Toc H—and under God its founders meant Toc H—to be a non-ecclesiastical, extra-mural form of Christian brotherhood. But you can’t have the fruits without the roots, nor can we continue to reflect the light if our own lamp of faith has burnt dim. Let our presentation of religion be by all means inter-denominational—not un-denominational—but unless each one of us is continually renewing his own hold on truth—taking from his own particular church those positive and constructive tenets which unite and need not divide men of goodwill—we shall not show Christ in the street because we have not sought Him in the sanctuary. Let us re-learn of Christ in worship, or Toc H will die—it were better then for it to die—for if it be not a religious movement it will soon cease to move, and when our own light goes out the darkness will be yet more terrible. It is only in His Light that we shall see Light and reflect that light to others.

A CLUB FOR MARRIED COUPLES

IN London, overcrowded as never before with civilians and the Services of the United Nations, it is still possible for a man to spend a night or ten days’ leave in some comfort if he uses a little forethought or is reasonably lucky. The same men turn up again and again as their leave comes round, and bring their friends, to St. Stephen’s Club, reckoning Toc H their home from home.

For married couples (one or both partners in the Services) things are much more difficult. The Union Jack Club has had married

couples’ quarters for many years, but they are usually filled to capacity. The hotels and lodgings are crammed and often booked far ahead: besides, their prices do not fit well with Service pay. For a long time our Headquarters has known the need and felt that Toc H should do at least something to meet it. But it has taken a long time to realise our dream of the right kind of house for such a Club, furnished and run in the right kind of way—that is, as a family and not as a hotel. Official sanctions, the search for a suitable

house, priorities for, and delivery of, furniture and fittings all took a long while, but at last we have been rewarded.

Clarendon House at 20, Queensberry Place, S.W.7, a quiet street five minutes' walk from South Kensington station, was opened (as we recorded in the JOURNAL) on December 14 last year. Very fittingly it was declared open, in a moving short speech, by Lady Clarendon herself. Its success was immediate, and indeed Bob and Mrs. Sawers, the Wardens, with a small team of voluntary workers and a devoted cook and all too small staff, looked like being snowed under in the first days. But they coped, and made the place feel like home from the front-door mat onwards.

Some Service men and their wives (whether civilians or themselves in the Services) who have arrived, have scarcely had a chance before during the war to spend a proper leave together. Others, just married, have chosen Clarendon House as the best place for a wartime honeymoon. Among these have been not a few Dominion men and Americans, married to their countrywomen or to English girls. There is also a small dormitory for single girls in the Services who sometimes

still find themselves stranded in London.

And so the Club itself, with its clean paint, new furniture, bright curtains, comfortable bedrooms and lounges reflects the happiness of its guests. Something, then, has been accomplished, something that some men and women will always remember with pleasure and thankfulness. But the enquiries for a room, by letter or telegram, which have not been turned down, especially at weekends, show that there is still need for more accommodation of the kind in the crowded ant-hill of London.

Our frontispiece this month gives a few glimpses of the life of the Club:—

1. LADY CLARENDON declaring the Club open. Seated on the right of her are the HON. ADMIRAL STRATOR. Col. Sir RONALD ROSS (who represents the Army and spoke), the Earl of Clarendon (chairman of our Revenue Committee) and Squadron Leader PATERSON (who represented the R.A.F. and spoke). The representatives who spoke for the Royal Navy and the Women's Services escaped being immortalised by the photographer.

2. The writing room—but they can't get on with their letters.

3. "This is the place for us."

4. Getting ready for that matinee.

5. H.M. THE QUEEN, who paid a charming visit to the Club on March 9th, chats with an American couple in the Dining Room.

6. All quiet on the Western Front.

TOC H WITH MUNITION WORKERS

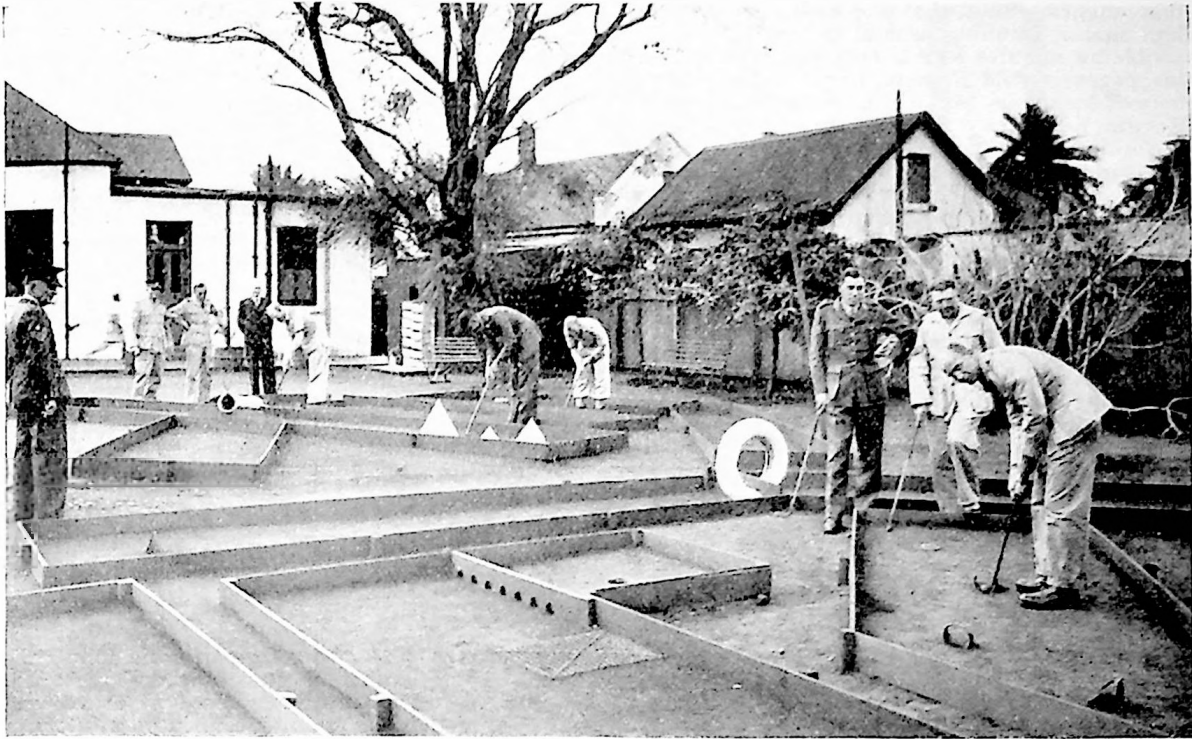
Much has been heard of Toc H Services Clubs, at home and abroad, since the War began but probably few members realise that Toc H has been running for a long time a hostel, under the Ministry of Labour, for munition workers at Rugby. Here is a note on it by the Wardens.

THIS old School House, now a hostel for conscripted, directed or transferred women workers, rings with laughter and dialects it has never heard before. Thirty-three hostellers live in cubicles which were formerly boys' studies, twenty-six in dormitories; in addition we have twelve night nurses from the local hospital. The dining-room is a sheer joy—old polished tables and benches, a big welcoming fireplace, mullioned windows and tablets on the walls which bear many historical names. During the past six months 8,794 beds have been occupied, 29,650 meals and 76,964 beverages have been served.

At night girls from billets in town come and sit in our nice lounge, where there is table-

tennis, darts, wireless, a piano, and, last but not least, chatter and a bit of 'gossiping'. One of the girls volunteered to be responsible for a sewing-class where they make, mend and knit. Outside people also come in to give talks on various subjects, after which there is always a great discussion on the night's topics. Part of our job is helping them to settle down and they soon find this is not a bad place to be in. The other residents join in helping to make them feel at home. Our Betty—4ft. 8ins.—comes from Yorkshire, calls everyone "luv" and generally raises a laugh wherever she goes. When a newcomer hears Betty say "Eh! You'll be O.K. here, luv"—well, it is rather like home. B. L. BROADBENT.

AROUND THE MAP



THE 'SPORTS GROUND' AT TAUBEL HOUSE, PRETORIA, TRANSVAAL. (Photo: Alan Yates).

From Persia

We hear a good deal of Toc H in Egypt and North Africa, but very little from the more distant parts of the Middle East. A copy of a long letter from Sergt. L. T. Luck, serving in an Indian Division in 'Paiforce,' to the editor of the Toc H Middle East *News Sheet*, has reached us. He suggests that the Toc H units in that Command—Baghdad, Shaiba, Habbaniya, Teheran and other Circles—should make their doings known to the *News Sheet*, and he then gives some news himself of Teheran. He writes—

"This Circle in the North of Persia is meeting regularly. If any Toc H members or friends are visiting this town they will find us meeting every Monday evening in the local United Services Club. We have arranged a programme for the coming months, and we look forward to bigger and better things, as far as Toc H is concerned during this year of 1944.

During last year Toc H Teheran met regularly every week. In the summer, when the temperature soared to the heights, we had our meetings in the garden of the Services Club. Each week we had new faces and also, alas, many familiar faces disappeared from our Circle—such is the

difficulty of these war-time Circles. Many times we have striven for civilian contacts in order that this might not be just a 'war-time Circle,' but somehow it generally consists of military personnel only—still, we keep on trying.

In November of last year we were able to have our first Dedication Service in the local American church . . . On that night many strangers were able to understand, perhaps for the first time, the great principles for which the Toc H movement stands . . . We look forward with great hopes for the future for good meetings, for hours of fellowship one with another, for more service to those around us. Let us hope that the flame of Toc H will burn into the hearts of many people who, perhaps unconsciously, are searching for this great spirit of friendship, love and service which is in reality awaiting them."

An Assam Services "Grove"

And here is first news from Toc H in Assam, North of Burma, from E. V. CORPS:—

"We have yet to receive our official baptism, but we are a lusty infant and you had better get to know something about us before you wake one morning and suddenly find a stranger at the breakfast table.

The grey-haired fellow with the battle-scarred Toc H blazer, who has just arrived twenty

minutes late as usual, is Lester Beastall, our Pilot and a Foundation Member of Toc H. On his left is the Padre, Chaplain Davies; his air of resignation suggests that the motor-bike has savaged him again. Running around in small circles and scribbling minutes legible only to himself—one of his pages is said to have found its way to the notice board as an Urdu Security poster—is Reggie Regnart, our Secretary. Busily having "Nothing to report" again is Friend, the Treasurer, aided and abetted by Laurie Laurence, his assistant, who can just be seen behind the latest consignment of stamp approvals. Jobbie Thornton is sorting out books and magazines for the C.M.H. while his assistant, Eddie Corps, is doing his best to make himself objectionable to the Secretary.

So much for the top table. In the body of the kirk are about three dozen souls comprised of a number of artillerymen, many of them from somewhere in Yorkshire, with a leavening of civvies, most of whom have come from Burma. Among the evenings we remember are the get-together meeting at our present rendezvous, when Lester

gave us a bit of the story of Toc H. Hamish has produced a *précis* of the Beveridge plan, which provided food for thought and argument for the meetings. The World Chain of Light was an inspiring experience where we felt that we, probably the easternmost 'grope' in India, had a special part; the steak and kidney pie which followed were up to the standard we expect in B. Ian Matheson has given us the low-down on driving, and what we know of laying tram tracks owe to Kitch's discourse. Webb put us wise to the tricks of Quantity Surveying, and Lowson spun us yarns of the building of ships in Scott's yards. In addition we have amused ourselves with 'sing, say or pay,' out of the hat speeches, singing bees, debates, etc.

Your humble scribe has only known the 'grope' since it arrived at its present station, and therefore, only write of recent activities. The minute-book records many enjoyable evenings at its former meeting place, where Cooper, now transferred, earned our undying gratitude for introducing us to Toc H. But enough for now. You'll be hearing from us again."

YOUNG AMERICA

Last month's JOURNAL announced that Toc H., in collaboration with the United States Office of War Information, is sponsoring an Exhibition, 'Young America,' in London during the Easter school holidays, illustrating the background of home, school, church and community against which the young American of 1944 is growing up.

The Exhibition will be held, by kind permission of the Dean of Westminster in the historic College Hall, easily reached by the entrance to the Abbey cloisters in the corner of Dean's Yard. It will be opened at noon on Tuesday, April 11th, and its 'run' has been extended to Friday, April 28th. It will be open daily 11 a.m.—9 p.m.; Sundays 12.30—2.30 and 4—6 p.m.

Here are some points in connection with the Exhibition:—

1. *A Film show*, illustrating American ways of life will be held each afternoon at the London Centre of Toc H in Dean's Yard, (two minutes' walk from College Hall). This is intended for boys and girls only, and admission will be by ticket. (See 3).

2. *An Anglo-American tea-party* will follow the film show, to which selected boys and girls will be invited to meet an American host or hostess. It is hoped that this will develop into an informal 'Brains Trust.'

3. *Admission* to the Exhibition will be free, but invitations will be required for film shows and tea parties. Apply to Alec Churcher at Toc H Headquarters.

4. *An Intercession Service*, lasting ten minutes is being arranged daily at 12.45 p.m. by the Dean in St. Faith's Chapel in Westminster Abbey. This will centre around youth and Anglo-American understanding.

5. *Visits to the Abbey* for parties of boys and girls will be arranged each day, meeting at noon at the London Centre.

6. *An American host or hostess* will be present each afternoon to welcome visitors and answer questions. Some boys and girls, home from evacuation to the U.S.A., will act as stewards.

The Exhibition is intended primarily for boys and girls, but it is hoped that our own members will avail themselves of any opportunity to see a new kind of venture in Toc H collaboration. It is hoped, for instance, to arrange for as many Central Councillors as can to visit it as a party after their meeting on April 22nd.